capacity of urea to meet the growing demand for enhancing the agricultural production in the country. The new and expansion urea units will be based on natural.gas/LNG as feedstock which is the most cost effective and the least polluting feedstock in fertilizer sector today. The new policy will enable the entrepreneurs to decide about their investment plans in the fertilizer sector.

Policy has also been announced for de-bottlenecking/revamp/ modernization of existing urea units, which will be allowed only if the additional production comes from using natural gas/LNG as feedstock.

Government has also formulated a policy for conversion of existing naphtha/FO/LSHS based urea units to natural gas/LNG as feedstock. The plants based on naphtha/FO/LSHS are less energy efficient and have a higher production cost. Therefore, the policy encourages an early conversion to natural gas/LNG so that they acquire a competitive edge in the deregulated and liberalised economic scenario. With a view to encouraging investments for switchover to NG/LNG as feedstock, the investor is assured that savings on account of energy efficiency after conversion would be retained by the plants for a maximum period of 5 years in respect of naphtha based plants and 10 years in respect of FO/ LSHS based plants.

Availability of pesticides

†1869. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to increase in prices of pesticides after enforcement of product patent in place of process patent under the Trade Related Intellectual Property Right, the farmers will be adversely affected,

(b) if so, the efforts made by Government to ensure easy and cheaper availability of the said pesticides to the farmers; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (c) Majority of the pesticides already in the Indian market are off-patent and their availability would not get affected. There is no control of the Government on production and pricing of pesticides.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.